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to the mysterious extreme at which it finally arrives, and he would absolutely reject such unscientific conceptions as supersensible realism, metaphysical realism, and supersensible or transcendental causes. These render the reading of his book as a philosophical help unsatisfactory, and leave the mind even more confused and perplexed than it was before. However, all discussions of this sort have their value, and Mr. Salter's book possesses a virtue which few other philosophical productions can boast of: it is very short. The author's pleasant style will also add to the pleasure of its perusal, and if read critically the book will evoke much helpful thought.

T. J. McCORMACK.

A REVIEW OF THE SYSTEMS OF ETHICS FOUNDED ON THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

By *C. M. Williams*. New York and London: Macmillan & Co. 1893.

This is a book, the perusal of which will leave the earnest student of moral science full of disappointment. Not at all that it manifests any lack of ability or information. On the contrary, it is at once clearly and entertainingly written, and at the same time packed with notes and comments that are full of interest and instruction.

The course of the book may be briefly stated. The first part, comprising nearly half of its six hundred pages, is devoted to the statement of the ethical doctrines maintained by thirteen prominent writers, whose views have been formed more or less under the influence of the theory of evolution, viz.: Darwin, Wallace, Haeckel, Spencer, Fiske, Rolph, Baratt, Stephen, Carneri, Höffding, Gizycki, Alexander, and Paul Ree. The rest of the book is the review of our author. This review is conducted under the topical heads: The Concepts of Evolution; Intelligence and End; The Will; Thought, Feeling, and Will in Evolution; Egoism and Altruism in Evolution; Conscience; Moral Progress in History; The Results of Ethical Inquiry on an Evolutional Basis; and The Ideal and the Way of Its Attainment.

These are all topics of great interest and importance, and the author has brought to the consideration of them a mind fully stored and entirely competent. But we look in vain for that discourse and criticism which above all other matters relating to moral science those who are interested in human welfare crave from those who tender their reflections upon ethical topics.

The great need of moral science is the discovery and certification of its basis. It is a need that far transcends the scope of mere moral science, for upon its right determination depends the right determination of a multitude of questions that deeply involve the welfare of humanity. It is a need that is not merely crying to be supplied. It is absolutely wailing. Could it only be rightly determined, mankind would fast enough orient itself in the course of evolution and with undissipated energy work out its best possible development. But undiscovered or uncertified it balks all process, save only that mechanical, halting, stumbling process that has hitherto obtained; a process that is, as all may observe, one that has little if any inward coördination, but is full of inability and cross-purposes. Since it was the

professed purpose of our author to review a number of the more prominent systems of ethics, which he esteems to be founded on the theory of evolution, his failure to notice and to comment upon so conspicuous a feature of moral science would naturally lead a reader, unversed in the works noticed, to suppose that those works had altogether slighted this topic. Such is, however, not the case. With the exception of perhaps Darwin and Wallace, all the writers reviewed by our author have given more or less attention to this matter, and they have left us in no doubt as to the positions which they severally hold. Most of them are Hedonists of one sort or another. Haeckel, Carneri, Rolph, and Alexander are, we believe, the only exceptions.

But a more serious criticism upon the work under notice is suggested by its very title. That title as much as says that the various works which are reviewed by our author are "founded" upon the theory of evolution, at least in so far as their ethical doctrines are concerned.

Now, what is the theory of evolution? What is its essential nature? Does not its very form consist in the affirmation of an eternal secular mutation, in which there is no discontinuity whatever? It says that existence in sum and in every detail is eternal and continuous process. It uncompromisingly forbids all suppositions of any absolute beginning, or of any absolute end, or of any absolutely final adjustment. Hence, no system of ethics can with truth be said to be "founded" upon the theory of evolution that ignores or forgets this essential character of it. Now, when we turn to the consideration of the various "systems" which our author supposes to be "founded" upon the theory of evolution, we find them, one and all, occupied more or less with suppositions of ends. All are forecasting some "ideal" condition, which, being attained, all chances of retrogression will be foreclosed and all possibilities of betterment will be exhausted. In other words, they suppose an attainment of death, or rather an attainment of a death-in-life more utterly horrible than any actual death can possibly be. The very first condition for an ethics that will be truly evolutionary must be the fit and full recognition of a boundless horizon to evolution in morals as well as in all else. Emerson perceived the truth when he said in "The Sphinx":

"Profounder, profounder  
Man's spirit must dive;  
To his aye rolling orb  
No goal will arrive.  
The heavens that now draw him  
With sweetness unold,  
Once found; for *new* heavens  
He spurneth the old."

And at present, the most serious efforts to establish a truly clear-sighted ethics of evolution, with an unequivocal disavowal of any and all Hedonism, is made by the editors of *The Monist*. It, indeed, is the key-note of the missionary work that characterises all the publications of The Open Court Publishing Co.

Any truly evolutionary ethics must show itself a doctrine that applies just as well to regress as to progress. Evolution is too often confounded with progress, but degeneration is just as truly evolutionary as is the contrary movement, and, looking the facts of existence in the face, mankind has no assurance of any unchangeable course of betterment. The principles of morals are, however, not dependent upon the benign action of nature. When the earth's stock of fuel shall become exhausted, or when the ice age returns, or when the sun grows cold, there will be no alteration thereby in the moral law. Good and evil must and will be the same under all circumstances, and no system of ethics is nor can be anything but a temporary makeshift, that does not as well fit the *diastoles* as it does the *systoles* of existence. We must look for a doctrine that shall inform the conduct of men not only for the fore part of the day, when all is jubilant and bounding and man asks only for some good task to do, but also for the evening and night, when man grows weary and craves for rest; for not only youth and maturity, but for waning strength, old age, and death; for not only the progressive era of cosmic history, but for the periods when natural conditions may disfavor mankind, when, say, man may gradually be so reduced in resources that the same will barely suffice for simple life-preservation; when under the stress of natural conditions the human intellect, in the course of generations, becomes step by step eliminated; when indeed humanity itself tends perhaps slowly, but with certainty, towards permanent extinction.

They who complacently protest that the theory of evolution leaves the domain of moral science substantially unaffected are surely in great default either in their comprehension of the nature and implications of that theory, or in their powers of circumspection, while those who suppose that moral science becomes evolutionary simply because of a little application of that theory to some of the subordinate questions that are involved, show themselves in a plight as bad as the others if not worse.

Our author notices without dissent, and even with seeming concurrence, the various remarks made by many of the writers reviewed by him in discredit of teleology.

Since as we have before protested the theory of evolution forbids all suppositions of any ends that are absolutely final, it of course follows that teleology is in the strictness of its meaning inadmissible, even in ethics. But in dismissing teleology, let us not pour out the child with the bath. However it ought to be with the interpretation of the order of nature as a speculative exercise, something that is analogous to teleology is an absolute necessity if ethics is to be anything more than a curious study of human practise. The universe may manifest no purpose, design or secular tendency, but man is and can be nothing but a miserable stray on the ocean of existence unless he sails on a course, instead of merely drifting. To do this he must take something by which to steer, and any plausible stability is better than no bearings whatever. At any rate man is insuperably drawn to thus mark out his course. If the theory of evolution forbids him to suppose any ends that are ab-

solutely final, it does not prevent him from ascertaining directions. Indeed evolution affords him data of the very first importance for that behoof. Instead of ends we have aims and if ethics is to become that counsel and guide to humanity, which we yearn for so anxiously, it must ascertain and certify that single paramount aim to which all other tendencies are naturally subsidiary. Teleology, or rather the determination of the aim of evolution, must prepare the foundation before any evolutionary ethics that is worthy the name can be established.

Again our author with considerable debate notices the remarks of the writers reviewed by him on the old question of free will and necessity,—but like the positing of some end or aim to be subserved, free will is one of the presuppositions of ethics. When man begins to debate the possibility of rightly ascertaining the true end or aim for his pursuit, or when he begins to moot the question of free will, he is debating not any question of ethics proper, but only whether such a science is possible. Unless conditions and events are functions, as well of man's personality as of his environment; unless persons count for something in the variations of the course of nature, it is altogether vain and idle to be troubled with questions of morality.

Free will and somewhat to be achieved are principles which whether well or ill founded, ethics proper must take for granted before it has or can have any *raison d'être*. As for free will, however the metaphysicians may have stumbled over their own feet, the common sense of mankind has never wavered. As a practical question (and ethics is pre-eminently a matter of practice) this question is not an open one.

But on the question of what is the true paramount aim for man to pursue, the decision that shall finally satisfy man is yet to be made. The best proof that no satisfactory answer has yet been made is the fact that we are still seeking an answer. As with regard to the needful prime condition for a truly evolutionary ethics we found wisdom in the poetical insight, so again in this exigency we personally find the most profound ethical philosophy in that same insight.

“ 'Tis Life of which our nerves are scant.  
'Tis Life, not death for which we pant,  
More Life, and fuller that we want.”

FRANCIS C. RUSSELL.

DER PESSIMISMUS IM LICHT EINES HÖHEREN WELTAUFFASSUNG. By *Dr. J. Friedländer* and *Dr. M. Berendt*. Berlin W. : S. Gerstmann. 1893.

The authors' aim is the refutation of pessimism and the foundation of a higher world-conception. This latter is a pantheism spiritualised by moral ideals and contrasted to Darwinism and materialism. Natural science is said to be the surrounding walls of the new view, furnishing (1) negative truths of criticism and (2) a knowledge of the positive features of nature. The negative truths are: the impossibility of the existence of a personal God, of the efficiency of prayer, of miracles, of the immortality of the soul, of the separate existence of souls without bodies.